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The Ecclesiastical Supremacy of the

Crown, proved to be the Common Law of England, 3s. 6d.

TRAVELS.

Travels at Home, and Voyages by the Fire-side, for the Instruction and Amusement of young persons. 6s.

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DOCUMENTS RELATING TO PUBLIC AFFAIRS.

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RESOLUTIONS OF THE CATHOLIC BOARD,  
FEB. 26th, 1814.

Resolved, That although we cannot but disapprove of the conduct of George Bryan, Esq. on the late trial of John Magee, Esq. nevertheless we unhesitatingly attribute his determination on that occasion solely to an error of judgment, as we have learned by uniform experience, that there does not belong to any community any member more pure, independent, honourable, and efficient, than that most respectable Gentleman.

Resolved, That the late independent proprietor of *The Dublin Evening Post* is deserving of the warmest and sincerest sympathy of every Irish heart; and that the Members of the Board shall proceed forthwith to take such steps as will secure to Mr. Magee full indemnification for the amount of the pecuniary losses incurred by that highly esteemed gentleman, for his unconquerable fidelity to the Catholic cause.

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PARLIAMENTARY REFORM.

Nineteen letters having appeared on this important subject, we commence the insertion of them in our pages. The first letter appears to have been written some time ago, and not to be connected with the present series.

*Letters from Major John Cartwright to the Rev. Christopher Wyvill.*

LETTER II.

*Strike, but hear!*

DEAR SIR,—At this eleventh hour of the day in the labours of the vineyard of Parliamentary Reform, as well as at the equally late hour of the day in our respective lives, that you and I, of all men, should appear on the controversial stage as opponents, is to me, I assure you, matter of serious affliction. But justice to that

cause, which, in my estimation, is the cause of highest earthly importance to our countrymen of every rank and every class, as well as justice to my own reputation, which, in your recent "Address to the Freeholders of Yorkshire," is most obviously, though anonymously, brought in question, leave me no alternative. It being recorded, that the difference of opinion, and the consequent separation of two apostles, so far from advantaging the enemies of Christianity, much advanced the cause of that great moral reformation; let us hope the present difference between two advocates for political reformation, may have a similar effect.

Had I, indeed, been ever so desirous of doubting that your declamation, in a tone of manifest displeasure, furnished an intended portrait of myself in particular, yet so to have doubted was put out of my power; for I had received a letter which forbade me even to affect such a doubt. Among the contents of this letter, I found a very free translation, for my private use, of those parts of your public document to which I allude. This letter was from my worthy, but, in my humble opinion much prejudiced friend, Sir George Caley. Although it appears to have been written at "Brompton, September 25th," it undoubtedly came to me from "Burton Hall," having, according to its superscription under the hand of the Member of Parliament who franked it, been put into the office of your post town, "Bedale," and on "October the 16th," that is, on the very day subsequent to that on which your communication to the *Leeds Mercury* is dated, and probably despatched by the very same post. That this letter, if not carried, had been sent to you open, for approval at least, if not in aid of the composition of the *Address*, is a fact to which you have put your seal; for the wax bore the impression of the well-known Wyvill crest, a signet under which, through

a long course of years, I had been in the habit of receiving your friendly communications.

That letter of the Baronet, moreover, by quoting a passage in one from me to you, nearly twelve months ago, namely, on the 3d of December, 1812, seems sufficiently to prove, that its own penman and the penman of the Address to the Freeholders of Yorkshire, were in mutual habits of confidence, of council, and of aid; the consideration of which will clearly justify me in adverting either to the Address or to the Letter, as occasion may require. If not parts of the same drama, they are at least the relative acts of an actor and a manager, one exhibiting to the public on the open stage, the other, performing his part behind the scenes. The nature of the case fully justifies me in making what use I please of the letter; even to the quoting, if necessary, certain parts of it, which, according to my, perhaps, weak understanding, appear not much in character with the gravity and dignity of the argument between us.

Having thus shown why, in self-defence, I am personally bound to notice your Address, I proceed. Although we may sometimes, on minor questions, have differed in opinion, yet the grand point of our difference is and has ever been this: namely, Whether it were most judicious to petition "that the Nation's Representation in Parliament be reformed according to the Constitution, and at once; or reformed according to the fancy and counsel of certain persons in the higher classes, and by piecemeal."\* a mode against which the nation was particularly warned by "The Friends of the People,"\* in their

declaration, bearing date the 30th of May, 1795.

"What we want," says that Society, "is a *free* House of Commons, and a *real* representation; any measure of reform that does not really give, and effectually secure that object, is *worse than unprofitable*, and the efforts to obtain it *worse than thrown away*." "The whole measure must not only be equal to the whole of its purpose, but it must move together, and act at *once* with all its force. *Gradual* alterations, or *progressive* improvements, which some men recommend, would all be successively absorbed, and sink into the standing system. *Partial* remedies serve only to soften the symptoms, and to induce a habit of acquiescence, while they leave the root of the evil entire." "Nor is the remedy complete that does not effectually guard against *relapse*."†

But as the language of your recent Address, proposing for the present, the adoption only of a limited measure, while at the same time it may possibly be interpreted to carry in its womb a fore-closure against any subsequent step, an explanation on that point seems necessary, even for the satisfaction of our *step by step* reformists. Your words are these, "a specific measure." "The measure we allude to, is *that* which this country adopted in 1780;" and "we therefore take the liberty to declare our resolution, to *abide by* this measure."

Of the necessity of the explanation which I ask, I have the stronger feeling, because only two days after the general dinner-meeting in the metropolis, on the 10th of June, 1811, an article appeared in the Morning Chronicle, a paper generally understood to be the organ of the Whig party, in which it was expressly recommended, that a certain "*degree*" only of reform ought to be attempted, and that those gentlemen, who "*pledged themselves* to its promotion," ought at the same time to make a "*solemn declaration*, each in his district, that he would *oppose all advances beyond this*."‡

And, Sir, you must undoubtedly know, that in a printed circular, of sixteen paragraphs, last year sent out by Sir George Caley, which, by the seventh paragraph,

† Wyvill's Polit. Pap. v. Prelim. Pap. p. 23.

‡ Six Letters to the Marquis of Tavistock, p. 11.

\* Consisting of Earl Grey, Mr. Whitbread, Lord Lauderdale, Generals Maitland and Macleod, Sir James Mackintosh, Sir Philip Francis, Mr. Lambton, Serjeant Bond, Mr. Dealtry, Admiral Sawbridge, three Howards, Mr. Wharton, Mr. Martin, Mr. W. Smith, Lord Erskine, Mr. Tierney, Mr. Byng, Sir John Throckmorton, Sir Arthur Piggot, two Loshes, Sir J. Swinburne, Lord Buchan, Lord Daer, Professor Millar, Mr. Bosville, Mr. Greathead, two Baileys, Sir Bellingham Graham, Sir Ralph Milbanke, Rev. Dr. Kippis, Mr. Holt White, Mr. Grigby, Rev. Dr. Favers, the Historian Laing, Lord Kinnaird, J. C. and many others. See Wyvill's Polit. Pap. v. 2, p. 129.

should seem to have been done with the concurrence of *confidential friends*, the same doctrine is introduced, in proposing "an association *pledge* to certain specific objects, and likewise *pledged* not to exceed them;" and in that circular thus sent abroad there is not word to intimate, that the intended limitation is to be temporary, and the project a *first step* only; but the text and context of the paper in every part plainly purports, that the projected limitation is meant, so far as respects any interference of the *nation*, to be final and conclusive; for, says he, "the people having cautiously interfered no farther than was absolutely necessary, would glory in witnessing the accomplishment of every *wholesome* principle of reform, emanating from its *proper* source, the House itself."

Nor is it, Sir, to be imagined you had not observed that passage of Sir George's above-mentioned letter to me, in which, treating on the means of preserving our liberties, and after pointing out to me, as persons particularly to be relied on in this work of reform, "your Devonshires, Fitzwilliams, &c. &c." he goes on to say, "in *our* opinion (reform) can *only* be effected by a *wealthy* association, *pledged* to a few essential points, and likewise *pledged* not to exceed them." In all this, coupled with the *anonymous* article in the Morning Chronicle there is a coincidence calculated to cause some alarm to *constitutional* reformists. For if the high aristocracy, seeing an imperious necessity of doing *something*, could once succeed in forming such an association as should enable us to do away, in the words of Sir George Caley, "the boroughmongering system to a *certain extent*,"\* whereby, with his other "specific items," would be produced what in his printed circular he is pleased to call an "effectual plan of reform."† The people, alas! would receive part of that vast debt of rights and liberties which is due to them, at such first payment, but a very "*moderate*" composition indeed; and casting my aged eye back over that space of time which has elapsed since the "*glorious revolution*," when "a free Parliament" was merely talked of, but not even a first step either then, or at any subsequent period, was taken; and contemplating also the modern improvements in the science of influ-

ence, my mind has a sort of instinctive feeling, that, if the next dividend were left to be paid them by "*the House itself*," they must wait for it till doomsday. But for a reform even to the undefined "*extent*" which Sir George in his *private* letter holds out, your *public* Address forbids "the worthy freeholders of Yorkshire" to look; for "your specific measure" of 1780, touches not a hair on the head of "the boroughmongering system."

Instructed by long experience, I am taught to set much the same value on the professions of our "*moderate*" reformists, that their *first step* will be followed up by another and another, until the same fullness of constitutional reform, as contended for by others and myself, shall be accomplished; as I set on the engagements of those Members who, refusing to *co-operate* in the best and wisest measures of patriotism out of doors, yet readily promise to vote for any measure of reform whatever, moderate or radical, when moved in "*the House itself*." Both of them may profess, and may promise with the utmost sincerity; but while from their moral characters, I may believe this, I yet cannot give them credit, as reformists, for having looked deeply into, and acquired a real knowledge of the subject; so as to see the true effect of their own mode of acting. There never having been raised in time past, in all its awfulness, "that general union of voice, which can alone effect the preservation of the constitution,"\* of what avail was any vote of a Sawbridge, or of a Fox, or of a Savile, or of a Whitbread? and without such "*union of voice*" what can the projects, or the professions, or the plans of yourself or Sir George, or even of "your Devonshires and your Fitzwilliams" do for us? Most assuredly, nothing!

I cannot, therefore, I confess, until a different line of action be adopted, set any intrinsic value on the following profession, which I believe to be very honest, of my worthy friend, Sir George Caley. "In one wish, however, we can most cordially unite, let us have a RADICAL REFORM.† He had before said, "We *moderates* only differ from you in the *means*, not in the *purpose*. We wish to ask just so much, and no more, as, by means

\* "Temperate zeal."—The address.

† "Effectually reformed."—Ib.

\* Caley's Circular.

† Written with the same emphasis as here.

of the *new vigour*\* thus thrown into our representative body, would *insure*"—yes, the word is "*insure*,"—that body having the power and the inclination"—yes, "*power*," and "*inclination*," are really the words,—"*to do all the rest by a legislative process*. We aim at no partial or moderate regeneration *eventually*; and at one blow would do away all the *root* of the evil, but leave the *branches to wither*: you, on the contrary, would *legislate for yourselves*; and do away all corruption, but your own, *root and branch*." Here, by the way, as is not very uncommon in the warmth of controversy, the irregularity *untruly imputed* to opponents is the very irregularity *actually practised* by the accusing parties. But of this more fully in its proper place.

In this place, only one additional word. What is the essential difference, so as to be an object of blame, between *lopping off* at once a branch of corruption, or *extinguishing its life* and leaving it to "*wither*?"

Now, considering unlucky coincidences and all circumstances, will it not, think you, be expedient to remove obscurity, by explaining what is the real meaning of your published document? Whether yourself and present associates, on whose behalf the freeholders of Yorkshire are addressed, really mean their *moderate* reform to lead us in the end to a *radical* reform, according to those "*genuine principles of the constitution*" spoken of in your "*advertisement*" or not? Will it not, I ask, be expedient that your true meaning shall be distinctly avowed? And here I will only stop to ask one farther question—"Would the eloquence of angels be able to persuade the strong-minded freeholders of Yorkshire, that, in totally disregarding the intrinsic wisdom of the foregoing declaration of the Friends of the People, in an address composed after 15 years more experience than you, in 1780, had enjoyed, you, and their other leaders, in 1814, had acted wisely?"

I remain, dear Sir, very truly your friend and servant,

JOHN CARTWRIGHT.

Nov. 20, 1813.

#### LETTER III.

*Strike, but hear!*

DEAR SIR,—Were Yorkshire, in what you now propose, alone concerned, were

the object a matter of mere local interest, affecting none but yourselves, the interference of a stranger would be impertinent. But as you are endeavouring to lay in Yorkshire the foundation of a scheme you intend shall operate on the whole nation, it is the duty of every Englishman who thinks you in error, and who has solid arguments to produce for holding that opinion, to expostulate with yourself, and to reason with his Yorkshire fellow countrymen, for averting the evils he foresees from an adoption of that scheme. It is on this account I am anxious for a full explanation. "In case the very imperfect reform you now meditate, shall be obtained, do you mean there to '*abide*?' " Or does your word "*abide*" merely mean, that the measure to which you now allude, to the exclusion of all others, you will, of a certainty, *propose*, giving to any other proposition that may be moved in the way of amendment—and moved with whatever knowledge and wisdom, your determined opposition?

Every one, my dear Sir, must allow, that the question upon which we are divided, involves in it the very happiness or misery of our country, perhaps to the latest generations. As such, I deem it to deserve a discussion of the utmost temper and moderation, and think it ought to be decided rather by argument than by anger. How, on this point, am I to judge of *your* opinion, and *your* language, when you speak of "*dangerous innovations*," but without either description or proof, "*which are strenuously persisted in by some rash men*," who "*scruple not to propose those innovations to multitudes of the very lowest classes of society in London, and in the late unhappily disturbed counties*." "*Their measures*" you add, "*you decidedly disapprove and reject*." After indulging in a fanciful, and as I conceive, totally incorrect view of the notions and the conduct of one person particularly alluded to, and of the legitimate consequences of that conduct, you proceed,—"*and for a visionary improvement, which is UNATTAINABLE at present, as we judge, by any peaceful means, these mistaken enthusiasts would obstinately reject a great PRACTICAL IMPROVEMENT, sanctioned by the ablest Statesmen of our country*." Nor do you lose sight of these "*rash men*," these "*mistaken enthusiasts*," or rather the one person particularly pointed at, until, in the way of contrast with the "*most guarded measures*," which are,

\* "*Newly infused vigour*,"—Address.